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State of Maine

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT

Children's Games

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CHILDREN'S GAMES.

The educational value of play is being everywhere recognized. Teachers are appreciating the fact that an important contribution to the training of a child is that which comes from the associations of the playground. Out of this recognition of the value of play has arisen an interest in games suitable for use in the schoolroom and on the playground. The following games are offered to Maine teachers in the hope that they will make more effective the opportunities for training offered through organized play.

A. CIRCLE GAMES

1. Cat and Mouse.
2. House Hiring.
3. Jump the Shot.
4. Jacob and Rachel.

1. Cat and Mouse.

Grade: first, second, third and fourth primary. All upper grades.

Number of players: 10-60.

Purpose: General exercise; Alertness; Coöperation.

Directions: Choose one player for cat and one for mouse. The others form a ring with clasped hands. The cat tries to catch the mouse, who at first is in the center of the circle. The players favor the mouse, who runs in and out of the circle under their clasped hands, but try to prevent the cat from entering by stooping (but not sitting) down until their hands touch the floor. When the mouse is caught, the cat joins the circle, while the mouse becomes the cat and a new mouse is chosen.

2. House Hiring.

Grade: second, third and fourth primary.

Number of players: 10-30.

Purpose: General exercise; Accuracy; Attention.

Directions: Number in circle up to as many as are in circle. Number one then stands in center and calls out two of the numbers. Those two so numbered, must change places while the caller tries to get into one of the places. The one who is left is "it" and calls out two more numbers. To vary it, the caller may try to tag one of the two changing places, then the one tagged is "it."

3. JUMP THE SHOT.

Grade: first and second primary, seventh and eighth grammar.

Number of players: 15-40.

Purpose: General exercise; Alertness; Quickness.

Directions: Form a large circle. One player kneels in center and whirls a rope, with a bean bag on the end, under the feet of those in the circle, who must jump as it comes to them. The bag must not touch above the knees. As each one is hit, he must step out of the circle. The last one to be touched has won out and may swing the shot for the next time.

4. JACOB AND RACHEL.

Grade: upper primary, grammar, high.

Number of players: 12-30.

Purpose: Alertness; General Exercise.

Directions: One player is chosen to be Jacob. The rest form a circle and Jacob is blind-folded. Then Rachel is chosen, but Jacob is not to know who she is. Jacob chases Rachel around in the circle trying to catch her. He calls "Rachel" and she answers "Jacob." When she is caught, Jacob must guess who she is. If he guesses correctly, the game is started again. If he misses in his guess, then a new Rachel is chosen.

B. TAG GAMES.

1. Three Deep.
2. Double Tag.
3. Spot Tag.
4. Squat Tag in Circle.

1. Three Deep.

Grade: first and second primary and all grammar grades.

Purpose: Develop ingenuity and agility.

Directions: The players arrange themselves in two circles, one circle within the other, the players some distance apart from side to side and each one in the outer circle immediately behind the one in the inner circle; all face inward. Two extra players, for whom there is no place in the circle, stand on the outside as chaser and runner. The latter may save himself from the chaser by running and standing in front of any two players (inside the circle), thus making a line three deep. He then is safe; but the outer one of the three is then "third man," and may be tagged. To save himself, he must run and take a place in front of another couple. If a player is tagged, he becomes chaser and the other one the runner.

2. Double Tag.

Grade: upper grammar and high school.

Purpose: General exercise; Develop ingenuity.

Directions: Partners with arms linked, outside hands on hips. Choose a tagger and a runner. The tagger chases the runner until the runner links arms with a couple, then he is safe. But the third man, the one left on the other side, has to run now in order to save himself, and link arms with another couple. If the runner is tagged, he then becomes the tagger and the other one the runner. This game can be very spirited and cunning or tricky, in misleading the tagger.

3. Spot Tag.

Grade: fourth primary to first grammar.

Purpose: General exercise; Alertness.

Directions: This is like ordinary tag, except that a player who is tagged must place his hand on the spot touched, whether it be his back, elbow, or ankle and in that position must chase the other players. He is relieved of his position only when he succeeds in tagging someone else.

4. Squat Tag.

Grade: All primary.

Purpose: Quickness and alertness.

Directions: One child stands in the centre of the circle and tries to tag someone in the circle, who must "squat" to avoid being caught. If tagged before he squats, he must take his turn in the center.

C. BALL GAMES.

1. Dodge Ball.
2. Centre Base.
3. Circle Ball.
4. Straddle Ball.

1. Dodge Ball.

Grade: grammar, high.

Number of players: 20 to 60.

Purpose: Heave movement; Alertness.

Directions: Half of the players form a circle, the other half stand inside. The ball is thrown by any person in the circle at any one within the ring. The ball must not touch above the knees. If a person is hit, he joins the circle. The player wins who is the last to stand within the circle.

2. Centre Base.

Grade: upper primary, grammar, high.

Purpose: General exercise; Alertness.

Directions: The players form a ring, one player standing in the centre and holding the ball or bean bag. He tosses it to some

player, who must catch it, place it in the centre of the circle, and at once chase the one who threw it. The one who threw the bag runs out of the circle, and tries to return and touch the ball before he is tagged. If he is tagged, he joins the circle and the other one throws the ball to one in the circle.

3. Circle Ball.

Grade: upper primary and grammar.

Purpose: Heave movement; Alertness.

Directions: Players form a ring. One of them throws the ball at another player, who must catch it, and throw it at some other one in the ring. It should be thrown in quick succession and unexpectedly. Variations may be made by having some one stand in the centre and try to catch the ball as it is thrown from one to another. If he succeeds in catching the ball, then the one who last threw the ball, must step into the centre.

4. Straddle Ball.

Grade: all grades.

Purpose: Alertness; Self-control.

Directions: Players stand one back of the other, half in one line and the other half in another line, forming two lines of players. Have feet apart in straddle

position. At a signal, the leaders of each line roll a ball between the feet towards the end of the line. The ball passes right straight through to the last one in line, who then must run with it to the front and take his position and start the ball through again. The line wins whose leader returns first to the front. If the ball stops or skips a player on its way down, it must be returned to the player skipped who then starts it the rest of the way. This can also be played with an Indian club or any two like objects.

D. OBSTACLE RACES.

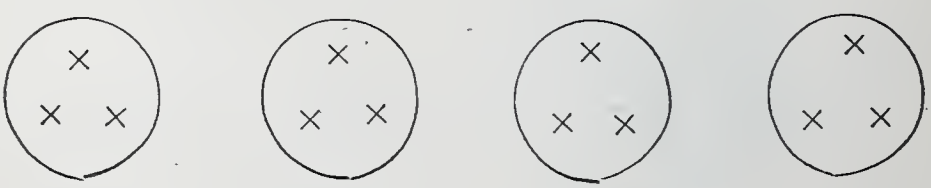
1. All Up.
2. Straddle Ball.
3. Relay Race.

1. All Up.

Grade: all grades.

Purpose: General exercise; Speed; Self-control.

Apparatus: Six Indian clubs or tenpins, chalk.



1. 2. 3. 4.

Directions: Place an Indian club on each cross in circles one and four. The players are divided into two lines, line A stands a certain distance from circle one. Line B stands the same distance away from circle four. Circles one and two belong to line A, and three and four to line B. The leaders run forward to their outside circles of clubs, place all three clubs one at a time, on the crosses in their other circles and run back to end of line. Each player steps up to the line as soon as the one in front runs. As soon as the runner has come back to the cross line, the next one runs. The line who finishes first wins.

2. Straddle Ball.

Purpose: A preliminary exercise for basket-ball.

Directions: Played the same as Straddle Ball in the group of Ball Games. But as each player receives the ball at the end of the line, he must run to back of room where the basket is and throw the ball into the basket, before he runs to the front of the line. For variations, the ball may be tossed over the head from one to the other, or it may be rolled under the first player and then tossed over the head of next, and so on, under and over alternately.

3. Relay Race.

Grade: fourth primary to first grammar.

Directions: Players stand in two or more lines at one end of the room or ground. The leader of each line, carrying a flag or handkerchief or dumb-bell, races to opposite end of the room, touches the wall and runs back, handing the object to the next one, and passes to rear of line. Continue until every one has run, and the leader is again at the head of the line. The line first through wins.

E. MISCELLANEOUS.

1. Step.
2. Duck on the Rock.
3. I Saw.
4. The Boiler Burst.

1. Step.

Grade: fifth primary to seventh grammar.

Purpose: March; Self-control.

Directions: The ground is marked off by two parallel lines, a wide distance apart. One player, who is "it," stands on one of these lines, with his back to the other players, who start at the other line. The one who is "it" counts ten rapidly, during which time the other players approach his line. As he says "ten" they stand still in whatever attitude they may be at the moment; he turns his head quickly and calls the name of any player or play-

ers whom he sees moving. Any thus caught moving have to go back to the starting line and begin again, while the counter repeats the count of ten and the players again move forward. The object of the game is to cross the counter's line without being seen in motion by him. The last one over, changes places with the counter.

2. Duck on the Rock.

Grade: grammar.

Purpose: General exercise; Alertness; Accuracy.

Apparatus: an Indian club, a bean bag for each player.

Directions: A line is drawn twenty or thirty feet from the club. The players decide who shall be "it" or guard, by throwing their bean bags, called "ducks" at an Indian club placed at a distance of about twenty feet, and the one whose duck lands nearest the mark is guard. The guard places his duck on the club, and the others try to knock it off with their ducks, throwing in turns from a line fifteen or twenty feet from the stake. As long as the guard's duck is not knocked off, he may tag anyone who advances to recover his duck. Whether the duck is recovered or not, the player is not safe until back to the throwing line. If the guard's duck is knocked off, all the ducks may be picked

up until the guard places his duck on the stake. The guard must continue to be guard until he has tagged someone, and even then must get his own duck and run to the throwing line before the player tagged can get his duck on the stake. The distance of throwing line from the stake may be increased.

3. I Saw.

Grade: kindergarten, primary.

Purpose: Observation; Accuracy.

Directions: In a long line. Leader tells what he saw on his way to school, starts off in a circle imitating it, and the whole line follows doing the same thing. The leader goes around until he is at the end of the line. The next child tells what he saw and so on until all have had a chance.

4. The Boiler Burst.

Grade: all primary.

Purpose: Individuality; Alertness.

Directions: All in a circle. One child stands in the centre who must tell a story, any story, and make everyone become interested. In the midst of a very interesting part, the child must stop and quickly say, "The boiler burst" and at that, all run and try to get home before the story teller catches anyone. Home may be the four corners of the room marked off in some way. Whoever is caught first must tell the next story.